

construction of the Lied Center for the Performing Arts at the University.

In 1988, he explained his generosity by saying, "I have always felt that if you're lucky enough in this life to accumulate enough funds to live better than you have the right to, then you have a moral obligation to pay back to the community or to the country or to the place that brought you up."

Nebraska was truly fortunate that it was the place that brought him up. We as a Nation were fortunate to have a man that made so many people laugh. Johnny Carson's generosity to the State will continue to provide benefits for future generations. And for those who remember, his personality will live on in our hearts.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

And without deference to the origins of the Speaker or to the other gentleman from Nebraska, I rise today to reclaim Johnny Carson as a loyal Iowan and a favorite son of the great State of Iowa, who migrated to the West across the Missouri River and made his home over on the Nebraska side. Iowa has much to be proud about, and Johnny Carson is one of those rare gems that will certainly be missed.

Johnny was born as John William Carson on October 23, 1925, in Corning, Iowa, down in mighty Adams County to a Homer, "Kit," and his mother Ruth Carson. A few years later he attended kindergarten in Red Oak, Iowa. He has not forgotten his roots at Red Oak either.

No comic has been able to duplicate the comfortable format that Carson emitted to his audiences nightly. As Harold Meyerson puts it, he was the "country boy who had become the urban hipster." In Corning, Iowa, everyone knows everyone, and Johnny brought that same small town feeling to Americans who watched him every evening.

And although he moved to Nebraska, Carson never forgot his Iowa roots. His generosity through the John W. Carson Foundation will be long remembered in Iowa. One such example is his support for providing classroom and rehearsal space at the Performing Arts and Education Association of Southwest Iowa, which is located at Red Oak. He understood what it was like to grow up in rural Iowa, and he understood rural America. And those people down in that region had not had access to performance amenities until Johnny made his contribution.

So in keeping with the spirit of the person whom everyone in America loved, he really did not just belong to Iowa or just belong to Nebraska, but Johnny Carson belonged to America. And he would be quite pleased if I took this opportunity to also reclaim Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns as an Iowan and also reclaim Roger Craig,

great running back from Davenport, Iowa, who slid his way through Lincoln and went on to win three Super Bowl rings in San Francisco. There are others. And I appreciate the life of Johnny Carson and the spirit that he brought to this great country.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the distinguished gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) for composing this resolution, and I thank my colleagues for their comments.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 40, a resolution honoring the career and philanthropic contribution of Johnny Carson. I want to thank Congressman FORTENBERRY for joining me in introducing this timely resolution, and I appreciate the opportunity to join my colleagues in honoring an American legend.

Mr. Carson, known to millions around the world simply as "Johnny," was not only the king of late-night comedy, but a true American icon whose wit and social commentary help defined generations of American entertainment and popular culture. During his 30-year reign of late night, he commanded the loyalty of millions of television viewers. He did this not just by being a gifted comedian, but by being everyone's favorite next-door neighbor, who always knew how to put his audiences at ease. His jokes on politics were always sharp and perceptive, but never below the belt. His monologues reflected the pulse of our Nation. He is and always will be the fabric of American society.

Johnny brought heartland values with him to show business, and he departed a class act. After he finished his final show in 1992, he never returned for guest appearances or prime-time specials. Instead, Johnny demonstrated his well known sincerity by letting his remarkable achievements speak for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to pay tribute to this great American icon, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 40.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

MEETING WITH IRAQI WOMEN CANDIDATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month I traveled with the Iraqi Women's Caucus members, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Tauscher) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) to meet with Iraqi women to discuss election procedures.

We held the meeting in Amman, Jordan. These were women who were candidates for the January 30, 2005, elections in Iraq. And it seems kind of strange that we would be training them in election procedures, how to campaign, when certainly that is a very different place, and the elections are being held in a war zone, and it is very difficult for candidates to get their name out, to even have their picture out and so that they are on lists which provides for the different groups. The women were from all different parties that are involved in the election. There are over 100 parties.

We had 20 of these women that came to discuss the elections. But we were so amazed and so impressed with the caliber of women. They are educated, articulate, well spoken, and at least five of them have Ph.Ds. But they are not only running for election, where we talk about how you have to speak against opponents, and you might say that you are going to really kill each other; they are actually putting their life on the line. So many of them have been intimidated. They have been threatened. One of the women has lost her 17-year old son along with her guard. Last week there was an assassination attempt on her again with four insurgents dressed as Iraqi policemen. Fortunately, they did not succeed, and she is still running.

One woman had been kidnapped and held for ransom and was finally released. Another woman lost her son. Another woman had five family members who have been killed just recently. And yet they are willing. Because they believe so much in democracy, they are willing to put their names on a list to be elected.

And fortunately for the women of Iraq, this is a national constituent type of election, and so it is not what we think of as having districts or provinces. But there is a list of the different parties, so people will have one

vote for the list, and then the number of people that are elected will receive—will be included in the government that is being elected and will have the opportunity to write the Constitution. But it was decided by the transitional government that women would be included, and that 25 percent of those who are elected will be women. And the way that that was done is that every third name on the list is a woman.

So we had the opportunity to meet for several days with these women, and the longer we met, the more engaged everybody became. You could have really very frank discussions. So many times when we go over there, it is just for a meeting of very short time. You never really got to know the women.

There have also been women that have come over here to work with us. But despite the differences in the women, they were Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds, independents and Christians, that they had not really discussed political issues with each other, and what we were able to do was to be able to facilitate and help them develop the tools and the skills to be able to work together and realize that politics really is the art of compromise. Some of them were very rigid in what they believe should be done, but they were able to see that you need to discuss, and it is very important to have a majority party, but also to have a minority party.

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Even the Sunni women that were there, who came in wanting to postpone the elections because their areas are obviously unsafe, they still want to participate. What all of the women told us was that they need to have everyone participate, all the different groups. Many of them, even within the different groups, are divided into other groups.

But we were really able to discuss this with them, and I think they went away with a positive reinforcement of how to deal with that. What we came away with was such a feeling of how important it is, how they view the democracy that we have and the freedoms that we have and how they really want to have the same type of thing.

Now, these elections are really only the first step in them reaching democracy, and they will be able to write their constitution and form an interim government. The constitution will have to be written by August 15, which is a very short time. The interim government will take effect, and then they will have a slate for eventual election of the permanent officers who will govern in December of 2005. But they are on their way.

One thing that they said to us is, The U.S., we think of them as occupiers, but please do not leave us until the job is done. We need you there. We really need to have a democracy. And they are willing to give their life for it.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate them and wish them well on their election.

SMART SECURITY AND THE CASE FOR LEAVING IRAQ, PART 2

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the United States invasion and occupation of Iraq violate America's core values of honesty, responsibility, security, justice and freedom. This has been a dishonest war from the word go. The President said he had hard evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. It turns out he did not. To date, no weapons of mass destruction have been found. The President himself has officially called off the hunt.

Irresponsible behavior has been a guiding principle of the administration's behavior in leading the Nation to war in Iraq. Specifically, what has been the response of our leaders when they have been exposed for misleading the country, or for sending American men and women to their deaths without imminent threat to American security, or what has been the response for keeping our National Guard troops in Iraq for many months longer than they had agreed, or for signing off on orders that led to torture in American prisons?

Our leaders do not take responsibility for their failures. Instead, they change the subject, make excuses, or worst of all, blame an underling. Not a single administration official has resigned as a result of the mistakes that led us into this misguided and dangerous war. George Tenet received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Alberto Gonzales and Condoleezza Rice are up for promotion, and Donald Rumsfeld is still the Secretary of Defense, although if he traveled to Germany, he could possibly be arrested as a war criminal.

The Iraq invasion has made the Middle East a more violent and unstable place, and it has made America less secure at home by creating a terrorist breeding ground in a country that was not a haven for Islamic fundamentalists before we invaded it. It seems too ironic to be true, but after our Nation was attacked on 9/11 by Islamic fundamentalists, the Bush administration's response was to bomb and kill civilians in one of the few countries in the Middle East that was actually inhospitable to Islamic fundamentalists.

Speaking of justice, there is no justice in an operation that has caused the deaths of over 1,400 Americans and untold thousands of Iraqis for the purely ideological reason that our leader did not like their leader. Nor do we serve the cause of freedom by killing innocent people in a country that did not ask for our help, by destroying a nation's roads, schools and hospitals; and in the process we have created a playground for Islamic fundamentalists.

Freedom is very important to Americans, and I believe that the President's recent inaugural address made a mock-

ery of the word "freedom." He should ask the people of Iraq, many of whom have suffered because they lost a loved one or had a friend maimed by foreign bullets, just how free do they feel today.

Some say that we have a responsibility to the people of Iraq to keep our troops there, that we not abandon them. This belief misses the point. Our very presence in Iraq is the cause of much of the violence.

We have a moral responsibility to leave in order to stem the violence. We owe this to the people of Iraq, who have been killed by the thousands and thousands. We owe it to our troops who are sitting ducks for terrorists. That is why later today I will introduce legislation calling for a withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq.

In the 108th Congress I also introduced a SMART Security Resolution For the 21st Century, which calls for a sensible, multilateral American response to terrorism. Adopting a smart approach to foreign policy will help us avoid the many mistakes that have characterized the war in Iraq.

By supporting my call to bring the troops home, we will send a message to the President, one, asking that he develop and implement a plan to begin the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq; two, develop and implement a plan for the reconstruction of Iraq's civil and economic infrastructure; three, convene an emergency meeting of Iraq's leadership, Iraq's neighbors, the United Nations, and the Arab League to create an international peacekeeping force in Iraq and to replace U.S. military forces with Iraqi police and national guard forces to ensure Iraq's security; and, finally, take all necessary steps to provide the Iraqi people the opportunity to completely control their own internal affairs.

Mr. Speaker, it is time we pursued a SMART security strategy for America, and we must do this by withdrawing our troops from Iraq. It is not too late to make the smart choice, the right choice, the choice to bring our troops home.

REPORT ON EVENTS IN SUDAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, this month we witnessed the signing of the peace agreement in Nairobi, Kenya, between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. The signing of this agreement has ended Africa's longest running war, a brutal civil war that spanned 21 years where 2 million people died. I congratulate the parties for reaching this agreement.

I also want to commend President Bush, Secretary of State Powell and his team, Ambassador Danforth and all the outside groups for their unrelenting efforts in the support of peace.

I also want to commend all the countries that played a critical role in the